

REMARKS

Applicants thank Examiner Rogers for the courtesies extended to the undersigned during a telephone interview conducted on December 16, 2003. In the Office Action mailed October 31, 2003, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 6-19 and 22-31 and objected to claims 20 and 21. By way of the foregoing amendments and the markings to show changes, Applicants have amended claims 1, 23 and 27-31, canceled claims 20-21 and 26 and added new claims 36-52. The foregoing amendments are taken in the interest of expediting prosecution and there is no intention of surrendering any range of equivalents to which Applicant would otherwise be entitled in view of the prior art.

I. Rejections under 35 USC 103

Claims 1-3, 6-19 and 22-31 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 in view of combinations of the following references: "Handle-O-Meter" to Thwing-Albert Instrument Company (hereinafter referred to as Thwing-Albert); U.S. Patent 3,838,596 to Neuenschwander; U.S. Patent 2,590,839 to Clapham; U.S. Patent 5,790,983 to Rosch et al.; U.S. Patent 3,804,092 to Tunc; U.S. Patent 2,786,352 to Sobota; U.S. Patent 4,103,550 to Alley, Jr. et al.; U.S. Patent 4,567,774 to Manahan et al.; U.S. Patent 3,151,483 to Plummer; and U.S. Patent 4,776,202 to Brar et al.

During the Interview and subsequent follow-up conversations, Applicants and Examiner Rogers agreed that claim 1 as written above is allowable. Thus, claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-3, 6-19 and 22-31 are presently allowable. Claims 32-35 are already allowed.

II. New Claims

The Office Action indicated Claims 20-21 as allowable if written in independent form. Applicants have added claims 36-52 and claim 36 is claim 20 written in independent form. Thus, new claim 36 and its dependents, claims 37-52, are presently allowable.

In conclusion, each of the claims, as presently pending, is allowed or allowable. Applicants request that the application, therefore, be allowed.

By amending the application, the Applicants do not concede that the patent coverage available to them would not extend as far as the original claim. Rather, Applicants intend to file a continuation application to pursue the breadth of the claims as filed. Applicants believe that the Examiner has not made a sufficient showing of inherency of the teachings of the asserted prior art, especially given the lack of teachings in the cited references of the properties that Applicants have recited in their claims.

Further, by the present amendment, it does not follow that the amended claims have become so perfect in their description that no one could devise an equivalent. After amendment, as before, limitations in the ability to describe the present invention in language in the patent claims naturally prevent the Applicants from capturing every nuance of the invention or describing with complete precision the range of its novelty or every possible equivalent. See, Festo Corp. v. Shoketsu Kinzoku Kogyo Kabushiki Co., 62 USPQ2d 1705 (2002). Accordingly, the foregoing amendments are made specifically in the interest of expediting prosecution and there is no intention of surrendering any range of equivalents to which Applicants would otherwise be entitled.

CONCLUSIONS

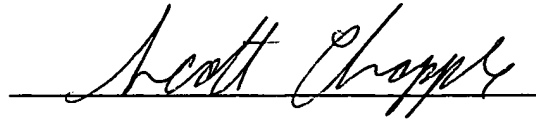
In view of Applicants' amendments and remarks, the Examiner's rejections are believed to be rendered moot. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and requests that the Examiner pass the case to issue at the earliest convenience. Should the Examiner have any question or wish to further discuss this application, Applicant requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned at (248) 593-9900.

If for some reason Applicant has not requested a sufficient extension and/or have not paid a sufficient fee for this response and/or for the extension necessary to prevent the abandonment of this application, please consider this as a request for an

extension for the required time period and/or authorization to charge Deposit Account
No. 50-0496 for any fee which may be due.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 12-22, 2003

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Scott Chapple", written over a horizontal line.

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